But proofs of their increase are the hundreds of new villages tilled by Kurds and built by them in the regions of Kubur el Bid, Amuda, and Derbassiya.

The Kurds like the Arabs, follow a tribal organization. Starting from the east, the Koshar tribe, mostly nomadic but recently turning to agriculture, dominates Jazirat ibn Amr, i.e., the region of Deink and Ain Diwar. The Koshar border Shammar on the south and they are on fighting terms because Nayefz Pasha, chief of the Koshar, killed the brother of Dham, chief of Shammar. Next to the west is the Shitiya tribe around Kubur el Bid. This tribe is old in the region. Its members are Arab in their dress and, in contrast with all the other Kurdish tribes, they speak Arabic as well as Kurdish. Its lands lie west of Shammar and more within the Tay region but its relations with both are friendly.

Qamishli, which is a Tay region, includes villages of the Pinar Ali tribe. But west of Qamishli comes a solid bloc of 100% Kurdish villages extending for more than sixty kilometers and reaching to the west of Dirbassiya practically uninterrupted by any Arab village. This area is undoubtedly one of the most fertile of Jazirah. Within it, the Dakkuriya tribe is centered around Amuda, then follow the Kikiya around Dirbassiya, and the Milliya from Dirbassiya to Ras el Ain.

The Kurds are considered very good farmers. They plow and plant with mules but they rent combines for the harvest. This is because they have learned that combine harvest is more economical. The Kurd is also greatly praised for his character. He is truthful, honest, and upright in his dealings. He keeps his word and the merchants of the Jazir trust him completely. He is also clean in his home and in his dress, and though Bedouins reproach him for not being generous in his house, his standard of living is higher than the Bedouin and his villages are much cleaner.

The Kurds owe allegiance to their Agha who takes the place of the Bedouin Sheik. But this relationship is weaker than is the case of the Bedouins. The successive Governments did not give the Agha grants of money or similar authority over his tribesmen in the manner of the Sheik. The Kurds were considered from the start sedentary people subject directly to Government laws. That is why most of the Kurds own and till their lands in their own right.

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MD1

no less important an element in the common consciousness than difference of religion.

It may be, indeed, that the religious doctrines to which the communities adhered were not in all cases the fundamental cause of their distinctiveness; that when these doctrines were first preached certain elements in the population already felt themselves in various ways and for various reasons different from the peoples among whom they lived and by whom they were dominated; and that they adopted the new doctrines as an expression of their distinctiveness. Whatever its origin, a sect once founded tended to become a closed community very conscious of its difference from the surrounding world: a difference which revealed itself not only in religious beliefs but also in customs and traditions. The sect persisted as a social entity even after the impulse of affirmation which gave it birth had died away. To leave one's sect was to leave one's whole world, and to live without loyalties, the protection of a community, the consciousness of solidarity and the comfort of normality.

6

Islam gave the traditional society of Syria its dominant creed, its explicit moral code and its political organization. Its language and literature and its images of heroism and human grandeur came from the Arabian desert.

The way of life of the Bedouin has deeply influenced Islam and been as deeply influenced by it, but the two are distinct. It is a way of life which has developed in order to meet the needs of the nomadic existence, an existence of the utmost bareness, insecurity, homelessness and poverty. It has alone made that existence tolerable and given it dignity and even a certain splendour. For it the cardinal virtues are courage and the other martial qualities; hospitality without limit or thought of recompense; loyalty to one's family and tribe; and reverence for the transmitted wisdom of the community, embodied in tribal customs and traditions and in a code of honour. The life of the Bedouin has no room for subtleties and doubts, and would be wholly barren of culture were it not for the Arab love of language, of story and of poetry.

The Arabian desert produced not only a moral system, but also a social organization. It was based upon the clan and